Forest Insect and Disease Management Group, S&PF
2500 Shreveport Highway
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5230 - Evaluation April 26, 1976

Ground examination of Kisatchie Ranger District

Forest Supervisor
Kisatchie National Forest

On April 23, 1976, at the request of H. K. Irwin, Timber Management Staff Officer, L.E. Drake and Norman Churchill, Forest Insect and Disease Management Group, conducted a ground examination of areas on the Kisatchie Ranger District that were damaged by high winds and hail associated with tornadoes that occurred in late March 1976. Sales are now underway in which a million or more feet of downed or damaged timber has been marked.

RESULTS

Several separate areas were visited. The only insect activity observed was pine engraver beetles, Ips spp., attacking downed trees. Beetle broods were in the larval, pupal and callow adult stages of development. No bark beetle attacks were observed in standing or leaning trees.

Many standing trees, primarily shortleaf and loblolly pines, scattered over sizeable areas on the District had been partially defoliated by the wind and hail, leaving the appearance of "thin crowns". Much of the remaining foliage, especially on the windward side of these trees, had turned brown. Some trees were "bleeding" in the area of the upper bole or crown. This "bleeding" apparently resulted from extreme stress caused by the wind and hail. Root sprung standing trees were common in the damaged areas.

DISCUSSION

At the present time, bark beetles are not a major problem in damaged areas on the Kisatchie Ranger District. However, the pine engraver beetle population is building up in downed trees and could become a threat to standing timber that was damaged or weakened by the tornadoes.

In an effort to minimize this possibility, it is suggested that downed and leaning trees be removed as soon as possible. Salvage should be continued as long as damaged material remains merchantable. Tops from these trees should not be left lying against standing trees. They should be lopped and scattered to permit rapid drying.

Due to the known presence on this area of all species of important southern forest pine bark beetles, intensive surveillance should be maintained by District personnel to detect activity in standing trees. If activity is observed, it should be promptly reported to the FI&DM office. Pest Management personnel will make periodic examinations to monitor beetle population trends until weakened trees regain vigor and it becomes evident that these insects no longer represent a threat to residual timber.

At this time the thin crowned and bleeding trees appear to be recovering as is evidenced by new growth and a flush of new needles.

An aerial survey of the District will be made jointly by District and FI&DM personnel as soon as possible (pending availability of survey aircraft) to determine the full extent of the damage.

If you have questions regarding this information, please let us know.

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